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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Patent and Trademark Office

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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/594,389 06/15/00 NAGATA

K F-6560

EXAMINER

QM12/1003

JORDAN AND HAMBURG
122 EAST 42ND STREET
NEW YORK NY 10168

NGUYEN, B	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER

3713
DATE MAILED:

10/03/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/594,389

Applicant(s)

Nagata et al

Examiner

Binh-An D. Nguyen

Art Unit

3713

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 June 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 3713

DETAILED ACTION

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hector et al. (4,720,789) in view of Saur et al (6,110,073).

Hector et al. teaches an input apparatus for game systems comprising: an operation member; ⁽²⁸⁻²⁹⁾ a supporting device for supporting the operation member in a predetermined direction; and a detection unit capable of outputting a predetermined detection signal in response to changes in load in the predetermined direction in relation to the operation member; the sensing element of the detection unit includes one pair of band-like electrode plates that contacts to or separates from each other according to the load, and the coating member includes a protrusion for limiting a position to which the load toward the sensing element is transmitted into a certain range positionally shifted from both longitudinal ends of the electrode plates into a central side thereof; the protrusion is arranged on an outer surface of the coating member; the protrusion is arranged on an inner surface of the coating member; a stopper for limiting a displacement in relation to the predetermined direction of the operation member into a certain range; at least an outer surface portion of the operation member is formed into a panel-like shape, the

detection unit is disposed to make contact with the outer surface portion of the operation member; and the stopper is located nearer side to a center of the operation member than that of the detection unit; stopper is adjoining the detection unit; a base having a plurality of panel-attaching sections; a panel-like operation member arranged at each of the plurality of panel-attaching sections; a detection unit located between a panel-supporting surface formed on each of the plurality of panel-attaching sections and the operation member and capable of outputting a predetermined detection signal in response to changes in pushing load applied to the operation member, wherein the detection unit has a sensing; the detection unit is made up of a plurality of detection units arranged at each panel-attaching section such that the operation member is supported at a plurality of points around an outer circumference thereof, and a stopper for limiting an amount of pushing operation toward the operation member is arranged at inside of each detection; the operation member is composed as a foot panel on which a player is able to stamp. See Figs1-4 and columns1-4

Hector et al. does not explicitly teach an elasticmaterial-made coating member, wherein the coating member also functions as the supporting member by contacting with the operation member; and wherein the coating member has a protrusion for limiting a position to which the load toward the sensing element is transmitted into a certain range. Saur et al teaches an elasticmaterial-made coating member (the combination of adhesive 47 and pad 18, Figs. 8-9), wherein the coating member also functions as the supporting member by contacting with the operation member; and wherein the coating member has a protrusion for limiting a position to which the load

Art Unit: 3713

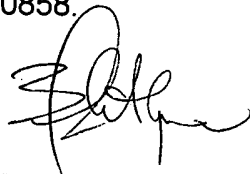
toward the sensing element is transmitted into a certain range. See Figs. 10-17 and columns 2-9.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the apparatus as taught, by Hector et al. with a method of coating sensor with elasticmaterial-made coating member of Saur et al. to come up with a more compact video input device.

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Binh-An D. Nguyen whose telephone number is 703-305-5713. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Valencia Martin-Wallace can be reached on 703-308-4119. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3580 for regular communications and 703-308-7768 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0858.



BN
September 28, 2001



VALENCIA MARTIN-WALLACE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700